

Gal 4. P. 7. e

J. S. Banks 1792.



*Observations on the Practice of Archery in England.
In a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Norris, Secretary.*

By the Honourable Daines Barrington.

DEAR SIR,

AS some of our most signal victories in former centuries were chiefly attributed to the English archers, it may not be uninteresting to the Society if I lay before them what I have been able to glean with regard to the more flourishing state of our bowmen, till their present almost annihilation.

This fraternity is to this day called the Artillery company, which is a French term signifying archery, as the king's bowyer is in that language styled *artiller du roy*, and we seem to have learnt this method of annoying the enemy from that nation [a], at least with a cross-bow [b].

[a] The term of butt or mound of earth on which the marks are fixed is likewise French.

[b] By the late publication of *Domesday* it appears that *Balistrarius* was a most common addition to English names, but I have not happened to meet with that of *Archarius*. See in Suffolk, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, and some more counties. In the Bayeux tapestry indeed the Normans are represented as drawing the long bow, but it is conceived that this *arvus* was woven many centuries after the Norman invasion, and when that weapon was used in France.

ALMA

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WE

WE therefore find that William the Conqueror had a considerable number of bowmen in his army at the battle of Hastings, when no mention is made of such troops on the side of Harold. I have upon this occasion made use of the term *bowman*, though I rather conceive that these Norman archers shot with the Arbalest (or cross-bow) in which formerly the arrow was placed in a groove, being termed in French a quadrel, and in English a bolt [e].

THOUGH I have taken some pains to find out when the shooting with the long-bow first began with us, at which exercise we afterwards became so expert, I profess that I cannot meet with any positive proofs, and must therefore state such grounds for conjecture as have occurred.

OUR chroniclers do not mention the use of archery as expressly applied to the cross, or long-bow, till the death of Richard the First, who was killed by an arrow at the siege of Limoges in Guienne, which Hemmingford mentions to have issued from a cross-bow [d]. Joinville likewise (in his life of St. Lewis) always speaks of the Christian *balistari*.

[e] Hence the term, *I have shot my bolt*. This sort of arrow is now chiefly used in Norfolk, where it is useful in shooting rabbits, which do not take a general alarm as upon firing a gun.

Fitz Stevens, who wrote in the reign of Henry the Second, says that the London skaters moved faster than *telum baliste*, which seems to prove that the cross-bow was most commonly used at that time.

[d] Du-Cange cites Guist an ancient French poet for the same fact, and Vineauf mentions that this king killed many Turks with his own cross-bow, l. 3. c. 11. It is not from these facts presumed that neither English or French ever used any sort of long bow at this period, but only that it did not prevail so much, as to train the archers in companies, in the manner that the Arbalesters were disciplined. It is not stated from what bow the arrow issued which killed William Rufus. In Shakespear's time deer were killed by the cross-bow. See Hen. VI.

AFTER this death of Richard the First in 1199, I have not happened to stumble upon any passages alluding to archery for nearly one hundred and fifty years, when an order was issued by Edward the Third, in the fifteenth year of his reign [e], to the sherives of most of the English counties for providing five hundred *white* bows, and five hundred bundles [f] of arrows, for the then intended war against France.

SIMILAR orders are repeated in the following years, with this difference only, that the sheriff of Gloucestershire is directed to furnish five hundred painted bows, as well as the same number of white [g].

THE famous battle of Cressy was fought four years afterwards in which our chroniclers state that we had two thousand archers, who were opposed to about the same number of the French together with a circumstance, which seems to prove, that by this time we used the long-bow, whilst the French archers shot with the arbalest.

PREVIOUS to this engagement fell a very heavy rain, which is said to have much damaged the bows of the French, or perhaps rather the strings of them. Now our long-bow (when unstrung) may be most conveniently covered, so as to prevent the

[e] A. D. 1341. See Rymer. Before this, Froissart mentions four thousand English archers in 1327, and two thousand at the battle of Cayent in 1337.

[f] *Garbas*, which Du-Cange shews to have consisted at a medium of twenty-four arrows. By another order (in Rymer) it appears that the *white* bows were six pence cheaper than the painted ones.

[g] The painted bows were considered probably as smarter by this military corps, and possibly this covering might contribute to duration also. As for the white bows, it should seem that they were not made of yew, which is rather of a reddish brown, nor could the sheriff well have found a sufficient quantity of this material in his county. We find indeed by subsequent statutes that yew was imported for this purpose at a very high price. For these order to the sherives see Rymer, A. D. 1342 and 1343.

rain's injuring it, nor is there scarcely any addition to the weight from such a case; whereas the arbalest is of a most inconvenient form to be sheltered from the weather.

As therefore in the year 1342, orders issued to the sherives of each county to provide five hundred bows, with a proper proportion of arrows, I cannot but infer that these were long-bows, and not the arbalest.

We are still in the dark indeed when the former weapon was first introduced by our ancestors, but I will venture to shoot my bolt in this obscurity, whether it may be well directed or not, as possibly it may produce a better conjecture from others.

EDWARD the First is known to have served in the holy wars, where he must have seen the effect of archery from a long-bow [b] to be much superior to that of the arbalest, in the use of which, the Italian states, and particularly the Genoese, had always been distinguished [c].

THIS circumstance would appear to me very decisive, that we owe the introduction of the long-bow to this king [k], was it not to be observed, that the bows of the Asiatics (though differing totally from the arbalest) were yet rather unlike to our long bows in point of form [l].

[b] It appears by Procopius that the Persians used a bow which was drawn in the same manner that is used by our archers, "ἐλκείαι δὲ αὐτοὺς παρὰ το μίλιον ἢ πύρα, παρ' αὐτοὺς μαλίστα τῶν ὤλων, το δίζιον. L. 1.

[c] In 1373 a French ordonance makes mention of Genoese arbalestiers, as being in their service.

[k] I hope to have proved in the first volume of the Archaeologia that the magnificent castles built by Edward the First, were similar to those of the Holy-Land.

[l] Our long-bow also differs materially from Diana's or Cupid's bows, as well as from those of the Daci on the Trajan and Antonine columns. It is likewise called in several ancient statutes the *English bow*.

THIS objection therefore must be admitted; but still possibly, as the Asiatic bows were more powerful than the arbalest, some of our English crusaders might have substituted our long-bows in the room of the Asiatic ones, in the same manner that improvements are frequently made in our present artillery. We might consequently, before the battle of Crecy, have had such a sufficient number of troops trained to the long-bow, as to be decisive in our favour, as they were afterwards at Poitiers and Agincourt [m].

THE battle of Poitiers was fought A. D. 1356, four years after which a peace took place between England and France.

WHEN treaties are concluded, it generally happens that both nations are heartily tired of the war, and they commonly are apt to suppose, that no fresh rupture will happen for a considerable time, whence follows the disuse of military exercises, especially in troops which were immediately disbanded upon the cessation of hostilities, and the officers of which had no half-pay.

WE find accordingly, that in the year 1363, Edward the Third was obliged to issue an order, forbidding many rural sports [n], and injoining the use of archery, which even in the space of four years had begun to be neglected; this order was again repeated in 1365.

THE Black Prince died in 1373, and Edward survived him but four years: we cannot therefore expect any further regulations for promoting archery, after the last order which I have stated, and which issued in 1363. During the six first years of

[m] In both these battles the archers of England destroyed the French cavalry, and in the latter are said to have drawn arrows a yard long.

[n] As "jactus lapidum, lignorum, ferri, pilam manualement, pedivam, et bacularem, canibucam, et gallorum pugnam." See Rymer, A. D. 1363.

this interval, the Prince of Wales was in foreign parts; and the whole ten were the dregs of Edward's life.

RICHARD the Second, who succeeded, is well known to have little attended to the cares of government; in the fifteenth year however of his reign (A. D. 1392) he issued an order, directing all the servants of his household never to travel without bows and arrows, and to take every opportunity of using this exercise [e], which injunction seems to prove that it had during the greater part of his reign been much neglected.

HENRY the Fourth, though of a more warlike disposition, seems to have done little more for the encouragement of archery than his predecessor, as the only statute of his reign which relates to this head, goes no further than obliging the arrow-smiths to point their arrows better, than they had hitherto done.

THE wars during his reign were indeed confined to this country, but the use of archers seems to have been well known, as the duke of Exeter, at the beginning of his rebellion, entertained a considerable band of them [p]. Four score archers are said also to have contributed greatly to a victory of this same king over a large body of rebels at Cirencester, some of which seem to have been of an Amazonian disposition, as his majesty attributes this success to the good women, as well as men of this town, and for these their services, grants them annually six bucks and a hoghead of wine [q].

[e] See Rymer's Fœd. A. D. 1392. In the twelfth year indeed of this king's reign, an act passed to oblige servants to shoot with bows and arrows on holidays and Sundays. See Rastell's Statutes.

By the 6 Hen. VIII. c. 2. all male servants must provide themselves with one bow, and four arrows, which their master is to pay for, by stopping it out of their wages.

[p] See Grafton, who informs us also that the Prince of Wales was wounded in the face by an arrow at the battle of Shrewsbury.

[q] See Rymer's Fœd. A. D. 1400.

Do not find any act of parliament of Henry the Fifth in relation to this exercise; and all the orders in Rymer, till the battle of Agincourt, relate to great guns, from which he seems at first to have expected more considerable advantage, than from the training of bowmen [r].

It should seem, however, that this sort of artillery from its unwieldiness, bad and narrow roads, together with other defects, was as yet but of little use in military operations. In the year 1417 this king therefore ascribes his victory at Agincourt to the archers, and directs the sherives of many counties to pluck from every goose [s] six wing feathers for the purpose of improving arrows [t], which are to be paid for by the king [u].

A SIMILAR order again issues to the sherives in the following year, viz. 1418.

IN 1421, though the French had been defeated, both at Cresey, Poitiers, and Agincourt, by the English archers, yet they still continued the use of the cross-bow, for which reason Henry the Fifth, as duke of Normandy, confirms the charters and privileges of the balistarii, which had been long established as a fraternity in his city of Rouen [w].

[r] See an order, "De equis pro cariagio gunnorum regis capiendis," "Pro operationibus ingeniorum," et "De non transmittendo gunpoudre verſus partes externas," A. D. 1413.

[s] "Præter anas brodages," which possibly means geese that were fitting or taking care of their goslings, we now say breeding.

[t] "Magis congruas et competentes."

[u] I am told by an arrow-maker, that these six feathers should consist of the second, third, and fourth of each wing. It is to be observed, that his majesty was not very munificent in paying for these feathers, as in the year 1417, there was little or no demand for pens, to which use at present they are almost solely applied. See Rymer's Fœd. A. D. 1417.

[w] See Rymer's Fœd. A. D. 1421.

DURING the long reign of Henry the Sixth, I do not meet with any statute, or proclamation concerning archery, which may be well accounted for, whilst this king was under age, or the weakness of mind which ensued, as far at least as relates to his personal interference in this matter; but it is rather extraordinary, that his uncles should not have enjoined this exercise, as they were so long engaged in wars with France, the loss of which kingdom may be perhaps attributed to this neglect.

It was necessary for Edward the Fourth, who succeeded, to be prepared against the Lancastrians; and yet we find much earlier statutes for the promotion of archery in Ireland [x], than in England, which was more likely to become the scene of civil war.

In the fifth year therefore of his reign an act passed, that every Englishman, and Irishman dwelling with Englishmen, shall have an English bow of his own height, which is directed to be made of yew, wych, hazel, ash, or awburne [y], or any other *reasonable* tree according to their power. The next chapter also directs that butts shall be made in every township, which the inhabitants are obliged to shoot up and down every feast day, under the penalty of a halfpenny, when they shall omit this exercise [z].

In the fourteenth year however of this same king, it appears by Rymer's *Fœdera*, that one thousand archers were to be sent to the duke of Burgundy, whose pay is settled at six pence a day, which is more than a common soldier receives clear in the pre-

[x] The English statutes of Edward IV. to this purpose are those of the seventh ch. 3, and twenty-second ch. 4, of the same king, in the preamble to the first of which it is said, "that the defence of this land was much by archers; and in the second," "that victorious acts have been accomplished by archers." *See*

[y] *Alder* probably.

[z] See the collection of Irish statutes, Dublin, 1723.

sent times, when provisions are so much dearer, and the value of money is so much decreased. This circumstance seems to prove, very strongly, the great estimation in which archers were still held. In the same year, Edward preparing for a war with France, directs the sherives to procure bows and arrows, "as most specially requisite and necessary [a]."

As bows and arrows were however finally disused by the introduction of fire arms, it becomes necessary, in this investigation, to take some short notice of what may relate to ordnance, or musquetry, and that Edward soon afterwards directs all workmen who might be useful for *artillery*, (as we should now term it) to be preferred [b]. On the war taking place with Scotland, eight years after this, Edward provides both ordnance and archers, so that though the use of artillery was now gaining ground, yet that of the bow and arrow was not neglected.

THE succeeding reign of Richard the Third opens with a similar statute to that of Edward the Fourth, but directs that all Venetian ships [c] shall with every butt of Malmsey, or Tyre [d], import ten bowstaves, as the price had risen from forty shillings to eight pounds a hundred.

By this attention to archery, he was able to send one thousand bowmen to the duke of Bretagne in the year following [e].

[a] See Rymer.

[b] Ibid.

[c] As also from other neighbouring ports of the Mediterranean, it is believed that there is considerable quantity of yew to be procured in Dalmatia, which lies on the eastern side of the Adriatic, and almost opposite to Venice. We were obliged to import foreign yew, as I do not recollect to have seen this tree in any part of England, with the appearance of its being indigenous.

[d] These wines came chiefly from Crete, which at this time belonged to the Venetians. See 7 Hen. VII. c. 7.

[e] See Rymer's Foed.

and availed himself of the same troops at the battle of Bosworth [f].

I do not find a single order of Henry VII. (in Rymer's *Fœdera*) relative to gunpowder or artillery, whilst on the other hand, in 1488 he directs a large levy of archers to be sent to Brittany, and that they shall be reviewed before they embark. In the nineteenth year of his reign, this same king [g] forbids the use of the cross-bow, because "the long-bow had been," "much used in this realm, whereby honour and victory had," "been gotten against outward enemies, the realm greatly de-," "fended, and much more the dread of all Christian princes by," "reason of the same [h]."

DURING the long reign of Henry VIII. no royal order issued which relates to archery, but there are several statutes which state the necessity of reviving this martial exercise [i]. Edward the Sixth used to shoot himself with a bow [k].

In the reign of Philip and Mary, the statutes of Henry the Eighth for the promotion of archery are much commended, with directions to enforce them [l].

[f] Arrows were found on this field of battle, not many years since.

[g] Henry VII. is drawn as shooting at butts. *Strat.* Vol. II.

[h] See Rastell's Statutes, 19 Hen. VII. c. 4.

[i] Viz. 3 Hen. VIII. c. 3. which directs that every father should provide a bow and two arrows for his son, when he shall be seven years old. 6 Hen. VIII. c. 3. By which every one (except the clergy and judges) are obliged to shoot at butts.—5 Hen. VIII. c. 13. chiefly levelled against the use of cross-bows.—25 Hen. VIII. c. 17. which inflicts a penalty of ten pounds if a cross-bow is found in the house.—33 Hen. VIII. c. 9. which recites the great price of yew bows [made of Elke * yew] and reduces it to three shillings and four pence.

[k] See his own MS. Journal in the British Museum.

[l] See 4 and 5 Pa. and M. c. 2. Rastell.

* I rather conceive that this should be Elbe, as 3 Eliz. c. 12. mentions bow-staves to be imported from the Hanse towns.

THE 8 Eliz. c. 10. regulates the price of bows, and the 13 Eliz. c. 14. enacts that bow staves shall be brought into the realm from the Hanse towns and the Eastward, so that archery still continued to be an object of attention in the legislature.

I FIND neither statute nor proclamation of James the First on this head; but it appears by Dr. Birch's Life of his son (prince Henry) that at eight years of age he learned to shoot both with the bow and gun, whilst at the same time this prince had in his establishment an officer who was stiled bow-bearer.

To the best of my recollection also, though I cannot at present refer to my authority, this king granted a second charter to the Artillery Company, by which the powers they had received from Henry the Eighth were considerably extended.

CHARLES the First seems, from the dedication of a treatise, entitled, "The Bowman's Glory," to have been himself an archer [m], and in the eighth year of his reign he issued a commission to the Chancellor, Lord Mayor, and several of the privy council, to prevent the fields near London being so inclosed [n] as "to interrupt the necessary and profitable exercise of shooting," as also to lower the mounds where they prevented the view from one mark to another.

THE same commission directs that bridges should be thrown over the dikes, and that all shooting marks which had been removed, should be restored [o].

CHARLES

[m] It hath been before observed that his elder brother prince Henry was so. See also Baker's Chronicle.

[n] In the fifth year of Henry the Eighth, such inclosures were levelled by an insurrection of the archers. See Grafton's Chronicle.

[o] Under these last clauses, a cowkeeper named Pitfield was so late as 1745 obliged to renew one of these marks, on which the Artillery Company cut the following inscription, viz. *Pitfield's Repentance*. I am informed also that Mr.

CHARLES the First likewise issued two proclamations for the promotion of archery, the last of which recommends the use of the bow, and pike together [p].

CATHERINE of Portugal (queen to Charles the Second) seems to have been much pleased with the sight at least of this exercise; for in 1676, by the contributions of Sir Edward Hungerford and others, a silver badge for the marshal of the fraternity was made, weighing twenty-five ounces, and representing an archer drawing the long-bow (in the proper manner) to his ear, with the following inscription: *Reginæ Catherine Sagittarij*. The supporters are two bowmen with the arms of England and Portugal.

IN 1682 there was a most magnificent cavalcade and entertainment given by the Finsbury archers [q], when they bestowed the titles of duke of Shoreditch, marquis of Islington, &c. upon the most deserving. Charles the Second was present upon this occasion, but the day being rainy, he was obliged soon to leave the field.

I do not find any thing relative to the state of archery during the short reign of James the Second, but it continued after this to be used for a manly exercise, as appears by the following epitaph on the south side of Clerkenwell church, which is still very legible.

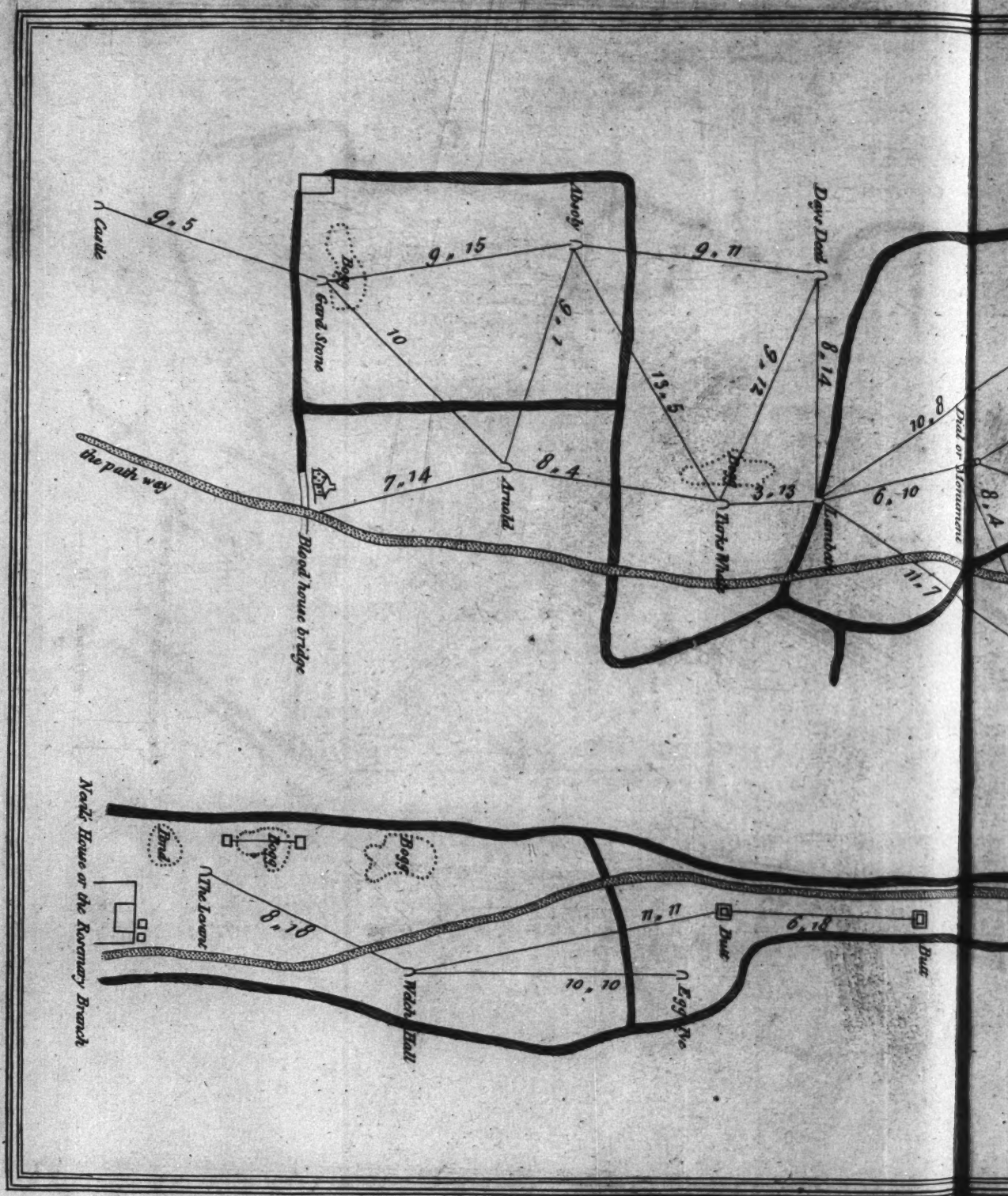
Scott (the great brick-maker) hath been under the necessity of making his submission. I mean to annex a plan of these shooting marks in the Finsbury Fields.

[p] See Rymer's *Fœdera* in the years 1631 and 1633.—In the latter, Charles grants the office of bow-bearer in Sherwood Forest.

[q] See the *Art of Archery* by Gervase Markham, 1634. 12mo.

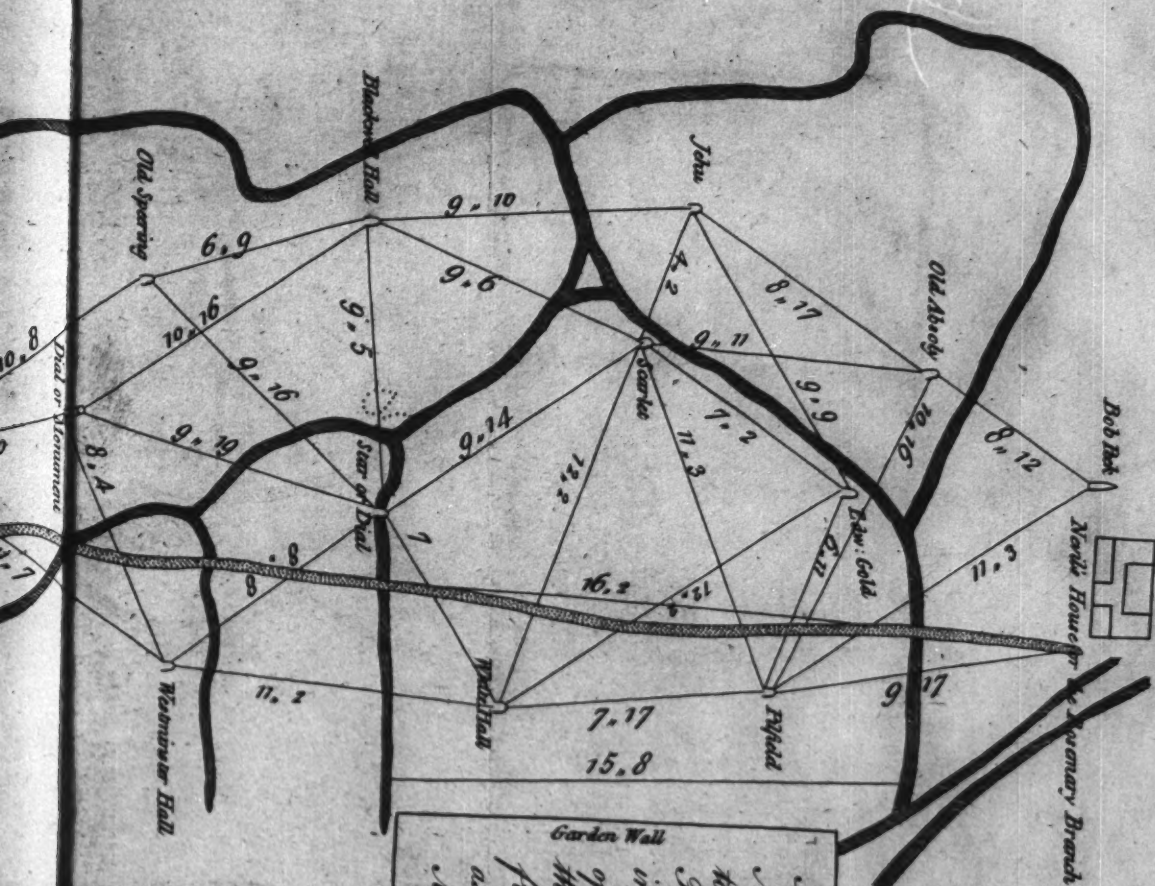
Sir

[q] A mistake, not Gervase Markham, but Wood's *Bowmans Gloxy* printed 1682. see pag. 39. The Cavalcade was Sep.^r 17. 1683.



See page 19. & note v.
23. 8.5

This Plate is (probably) copied from "2"



A Plan of all the
Marks belonging
to the Company of
Gunpowder, situated
in the said Fields
of Finsbury with
the true distance
from each other
as they now stand
May the 20th 1737.

The first
figure denotes
the place & the
second the num-
ber of paces be-
low a corner.

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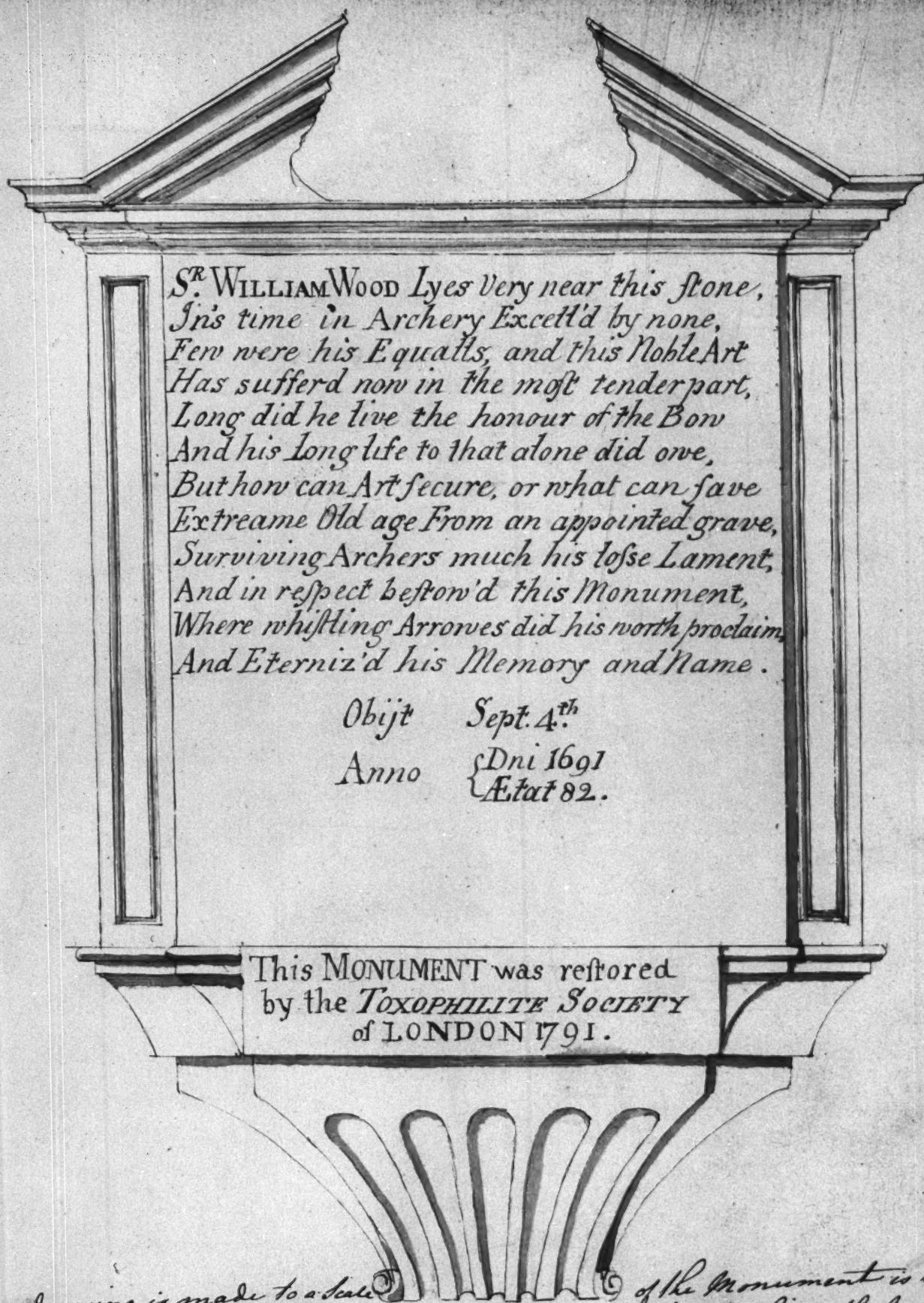


To his Grace the Duke of
TOXOPHILITE Society of London,
 a Celebrated Archer of the last
 in the Possession of that Society,
 his Grace's, & their Obed^t. Hum^{ts}



Leeds President, & the
 This Portrait of **SIR WILL. WOOD**,
 Century, from an Original Picture
 is Respectfully Inscribed by
 Servants. *J. & C. Harding*

London. Pub^d by E & S. Harding.



*S^R WILLIAM WOOD Lyes Very near this Stone,
In's time in Archery Excell'd by none,
Few were his Equalls, and this Noble Art
Has sufferd now in the most tender part,
Long did he live the honour of the Bow
And his Long life to that alone did owe,
But how can Art secure, or what can save
Extreame Old age From an appointed grave,
Surviving Archers much his losse Lament,
And in respect bestow'd this Monument,
Where whistling Arrowes did his worth proclaim,
And Eterniz'd his Memory and Name.*

Obijt Sept. 4th
Anno { Dni 1691
 { Etat 82.

THIS MONUMENT was restored
by the *TOXOPHILITE SOCIETY*
of LONDON 1791.

*The above drawing is made to a scale
of two Inches to a foot. The Tablet is
plain black Marble and the letters
engraved on it are gilded. The rest*

*W. M. Batley R.
Del. July 10. 1794.*

*of the Monument is wood
painted white. The Inscription
below the Epitaph is in black
letters on a white ground.*

Sir William Wood lies very near this stone,
 In's time of archery excelled by none;
 Few were his equals, and this noble art
 Hath suffer'd now in the most tender part.
 Long did he live the honour of the bow,
 And his long life to that alone did owe;
 But how can art secure, or what can save,
 Extreme old age from an appointed grave?
 Surviving archers much his loss lament,
 And in respect bestow'd this monument,
 Where *whistling arrows* [r] did his worth proclaim,
 And eternize his memory, and name.

Obiit Sept. 4. A. D. 1691. æt. 82.

There is a very good portrait of this famous archer, belonging to the Artillery Company, at a public house which looks into the Artillery Ground [s].

ARCHERY however did not entirely dye with Sir William Wood, for in 1696 a widow (named Mrs. Elizabeth Shakerley [t]) left by her will thirty-five pounds to be distributed in prizes to this fraternity. Possibly she had attended the Finsbury archers, from the same curiosity which Ovid ascribes to Penelope [u].

In the succeeding reign of queen Anne, I have been informed by general Oglethorpe, that together with the duke of Rutland

[r] These arrows are still sometimes used, the horn work being hollow, as also filled with holes. The air passing through these arrows makes a whistling both in the ascent and descent.—They are supposed to have been used by the piquet guards, to give notice to the camp of the enemy's approach during the night.

[s] The Blue Anchor, Bunhill-Row.

[t] See MS. penes the Artillery Company.

[u] Penelope juvenum vires tentabat in arcu,

Qui latus argueret corneus arcus erat.

and

and several others of considerable rank, he used frequently to shoot in the neighbourhood of London. I do not presume to guess the general's age, but he must be advanced in years, as he was aid-de-camp to prince Eugene of Savoy, and still continues to handle his bow in such a manner, that there is little doubt but that he would distinguish himself in this manly exercise.

I do not find in the archives of the company any memoranda of consequence during the reign of George the First, but till the year 1753 targets were erected in the Finsbury fields, during the Easter and Whitsun holidays, when the best shooter was styled captain for the ensuing year, and the second, lieutenant. Of these there are only two now surviving, viz. Mr. Benjamin Poole and Mr. Philip Constable, who have frequently obtained these titles. The former of these is now rather aged and infirm, but the latter hath been so obliging as to shew me most of their marks in the Finsbury Fields, as well as to communicate several anecdotes and observations relative to archery.

HAVING now deduced the history of the long-bow even to the present times, when it ceases to be used by the chartered company [w], I shall now endeavour to suggest the reasons, why this military weapon was so decisive in the battles of preceding centuries.

BEFORE the introduction of fire-arms the enemy could only be struck at a distance by slings, the bow used by the ancients,

[w] It revives however under the auspices of our worthy member Sir Ashton Lever.

A silver arrow used till within these few years to be shot for by the young gentlemen of Harrow School. Annual prizes are also still given at Edinburgh to those who excel in this exercise.

or the cross-bow; to all which the English long-bow was infinitely superior.

As for slings, they never have been used in the more northern parts of Europe by armies in the field [x]: for which as there must have been some fundamental reasons; I will venture to suggest two, though possibly there may be many others.

It should seem, in the first place, that slingers cannot advance in a compact body, on account of the space to be occupied by this weapon in its rotatory motion; and in the second place, that the weight of the stones to be carried must necessarily impede the slingers greatly in their movements.

THE bow of the ancients, as represented in all their reliefs, was a mere toy compared with that of our ancestors [y]; it was therefore chiefly used by the Parthians, whose attacks (like those of the present Arabs) were desultory.

As for the cross-bow, it is of a most inconvenient form for carriage, even with the modern improvements; and, in case of rain, could not be easily secured from the weather. After the first shot moreover it could not be recharged under a considerable time, whilst the bolts were also heavy and cumbersome.

THE English long-bow, on the other hand, together with the quiver of arrows, was easily carried by the archer, as easily secured from rain, and recharged almost instantaneously. It is not therefore extraordinary, that troops, who solely used this most effectual weapon, should generally obtain the victory, even when opposed to much more numerous armies.

BUT it may be urged, that these losses having been experienced by our enemies, must have induced them to practise the

[x] Sometimes perhaps in sieges.

[y] The bow used by the natives of George's Sound N. Lat. 50 on the N. W. coast of America is in form very similar to the Roman bow. See a specimen at Sir A. Lever's Museum.

same mode of warfare, which was actually attempted both by the French [x] and Scots [a] though too late in the day.

I HAVE endeavoured already to prove, that the long-bow was not commonly used even in England till the time of Edward the Third, when the victory at Crescy sufficiently proclaimed the superiority of that weapon.

IT required however so much training before the archer could be expert, that we must not be surprised if soon afterwards this military exercise was much neglected, as appears by the preambles of several ancient statutes which I have already cited.

WHILST the military tenures subsisted, the sovereign could only call upon his tenants during war, who therefore attended with the weapons they had been used to, and which required no previous practice.

ON the other hand, the English archers were obliged by acts of parliament, even in time of peace, to erect butts in every parish, and to shoot on every Sunday and holiday, after repairing perhaps to these butts from a considerable distance, whilst the expence of at least a yew-bow, is represented as being a charge, which they were scarcely equal to [b].

THE king and parliaments of this country having thus compelled the inhabitants to such training, the English armies had

[x] In 1444 an establishment in France was at least intended, of no less than four thousand archers, and every parish was obliged to furnish one. See Pasquier's *Recherches de la France*, p. 133.

[a] See the statute of James the First of Scotland, A. D. 1424. The title of which is "That ilk man busk them to be archeres." They are therefore to begin this exercise at twelve years old. See likewise other Scotch acts, viz. in 1457, 1474 and 1491.

[b] By one of the ancient statutes a bow of foreign yew may be sold for no more than six shillings.

(it should seem) the same advantage over our enemies, as the exclusive use of firearms would give us at present.

It appears also by what hath been already stated that the long-bow continued to be in estimation for more than two centuries after gunpowder was introduced, which probably arose from musquets being very cumbersome and unwieldy. It is well known that rapid movements are generally decisive of the campaign, and for such the archers were particularly adapted, because, as they could not be annoyed at the same distance by the weapons of the enemy, they had scarcely any occasion for armour. The flower of ancient armies likewise was the cavalry, against which the long-bow never failed to prevail, as man and horse were too large objects to be missed; and hence the great number of French nobility who were prisoners at Crecy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, for being dismounted (if not wounded) whilst they were also clad in heavy armour, they could not make their escape.

THE same reason accounts for our obtaining these signal victories with so inferior numbers, for the nobility and gentry thus becoming prisoners, the other parts of the French army made little or no resistance.

HAVING mentioned so many advantages on the side of the English archers, I cannot but observe, that if the enemy gained the wind against them, it must have been almost as decisive in favour of our opponents, as when it is obtained in a sea fight: I conclude however, that our generals avoided engagements if possible, when the wind was not favourable.

I SHALL now conclude this essay by a few anecdotes and general observations relative to the subject.

C

THOUGH

THOUGH we hear of arrows at Cheviot Chase which were a yard long, yet it is by no means to be supposed that the whole band made use of such, or could draw them to the head.

THE regulation of the Irish statute of Edward the Fourth, viz. *that the bow shall not exceed the height of the man*, is allowed by archers to have been well considered; and as the arrow should be half the length of the bow, this would give an arrow of a yard in length to those only who were six feet high. A strong man of this size in the present times cannot easily draw above twenty-four inches, if the bow is of a proper strength to do execution at a considerable distance. At the same time it must be admitted, that as our ancestors were obliged by some of the old statutes to begin shooting with the long-bow at the age of seven, they might have acquired a greater slight in this exercise, than their descendants, though the latter should be allowed to be of equal strength.

As the shooting with the long-bow was first introduced in England, and practised almost exclusively for nearly two centuries, so it hath occasioned a peculiar method of drawing the arrow to the *ear*, and not to the breast.

THAT this is contrary to the usage of the ancients [c] is very clear from their *reliefs*, and from the tradition of the Amazons cutting off one of their paps, as it occasioned an impediment to their shooting [d].

As for Diana's not having suffered the same amputation, it must be remembered that she was not only a goddess, but most active huntress, and professed the most perfect chastity; she therefore could not be supposed to have been impeded by such an obstacle to archery, as *Juno* or *Ceres*.

[c] Νευρὴν μὲν μαζῶν πελάσσειν, τοξῶν δὲ σιδήρεον.

Homer.

[d] Unum exēcta latus pugnæ, pharetrata Camilla.

Virgil.

THE Finsbury archer is therefore represented in this attitude of drawing to the ear, both in *The Bowman's Glory*, as also in the silver badge given by Catherine (queen of Charles the Second) to the Artillery Company.

SEVERAL years ago there was a man named Topham who exhibited most surprizing feats of strength, and who happened to be at a public house near Islington, to which the Finsbury archers resorted, after their exercise. Topham considered the long-bow as a play-thing, only fit for a child, upon which one of the archers laid him a bowl of punch, that he could not draw the arrow two thirds of its length. Topham accepted this bet with the greatest confidence of winning, but bringing the arrow to his breast, instead of his ear, he was greatly mortified by paying the wager, after many fruitless efforts.

As to the distance to which an arrow can be shot from a long-bow with the best elevation of forty-five degrees, that must necessarily depend much both upon the strength and flight of the archer, but as the longest distance I can find in the annexed plans is eleven score and seven yards [e]. I conclude that such length is not often exceeded [f].

THERE is indeed a tradition that an attorney of Wigan in Lancashire (named Leigh) shot a mile in three flights, but the same tradition states, that he placed himself in a very particular attitude, which cannot be used commonly in this exercise [g].

[e] Viz. from the mark of *Lambeth* to that of *Westminster Hall*.

[f] "He'll clap you in the clout at *twelve score*," *Shakespeare*. This however seems to be mentioned as an extraordinary feat.

It must be admitted however that by 33 Henry VIII. no one aged twenty-four is to shoot at any mark under eleven score.

[g] He is supposed to have sat on a stool, the middle of his bow being fastened to one of his feet, to have elevated that foot forty-five degrees, and drawn the string of a strong bow with both his hands.

THE archers consider an arrow of an ounce weight [f] to be the best for flight or hitting a mark at a considerable distance, and that asp also is the best material of which they can be made.

As to the feathers, that of a goose is preferred; it is also wished, that the bird should be two or three years old, and that the feather may drop of itself [g].

AND here it may not perhaps be improper to explain the *grey goose* wing in the ballad of Cheviot Chase.

Two out of the three feathers in an arrow are commonly white, being plucked from the gander, but the third is generally brown or gray, being taken from the goose, and from this difference in point of colour informs the archer when the arrow is properly placed. From this most distinguished part therefore the whole arrow sometimes receives its name.

THOUGH archery continued to be encouraged by the king, and legislature for more than two centuries, after the first knowledge of the effects of gunpowder, yet by the latter end of the reign of Henry the Eighth, it seems to have been partly considered as a pastime [b].

ARTHUR

[f] They generally speak indeed of an arrow's weighing so many shillings.

[g] Edward the Third however directed the sherives to pluck the proper feathers from the geese in every county. His majesty however wanted these upon the *spur* of an occasion, and could not wait till the feathers dropped.

Ascham in his *Toxophilus* breaks out into the following panegyric on a goose, because this bird supplies feathers for arrows.

"How well does she make a man fare at his table, how easily does she make
"a man lye down in his bed, how fit even as her feathers be for shooting, so
"be her quills only fit for writing."

Julius Scaliger hath also given us "*Laudes Anseris*."

[b] Lord Herbert observes, that in 1544 Henry the Eighth had himself invented small pieces of artillery to defend his waggons; as also that he took an account of all the ordnance then in the tower, and sent much of it to Tilbury, Gravesend,

ARTHUR, the elder brother of Henry, is said to have been fond of this exercise, in so much, that a good shooter, was stiled prince Arthur [a].

We are also informed [b], that he pitched his tent at Mile-End, in order to be present at this recreation, and that Henry his brother also attended.

When the latter afterwards became king, he gave a prize at Windsor to those who should excel in this exercise [c], and a capital shot having been made, Henry said to Barlow (one of his guards) "if you still win, you shall be duke over all archers." Barlow therefore having succeeded, and living in Shoreditch, was stiled duke thereof [d].

Upon another occasion Henry and the queen were met by two hundred archers on Shooter's Hill, which probably took its name from the archers assembling near it to shoot at marks.

This king likewise gave the first charter to the Artillery Company in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, by which they are permitted to wear dresses of any colour except purple and scarlet [e], to shoot not only at marks, but birds [f], if not pheasants

Graveyard, Dover, and Portsmouth. That he revalled himself of the artillery destined for the last of these places, appears by an engraving lately published by the Society.

[g] See Stowe. [h] Bowman's Glory. [i] In the time of Charles the First, the gunners stiled those who contended for the use of archery, *king Harry's captains*. See the List of Archery by Gervas Markham 1634, 12mo.

[j] This title together with that of *marquis of Islington*, *earl of Pancridge*, &c. were kept up even so late as 1683, these being all villages in the neighbourhood of the Finsbury Fields.

[k] Many statutes of this reign restrain expense and colours of the dress. [l] Though it is said that Indians shoot both birds and beasts, it is believed that this is effected by the archers stealing very near to them. Nor are animals

unskilful archers, who had no grace in their attitudes, and were therefore spoken of by the expert with the greatest contempt, so that *to shoot like a crowkeeper*, had become proverbial.

ASCHAM mentions another particular with regard to archery in his time, which is, that (as it commonly happens in other pastimes) the bets at these shooting matches began to be considerable.

I SHALL conclude this essay by mentioning, that the long-bow continues to be used as a manly exercise by the inhabitants of Geneva, and in many parts of Flanders; nor is it totally neglected in Great Britain, particularly Lancashire [r], and London, where a society (of which our worthy member Sir Ashton Lever is the president) frequently use this manly recreation.

I TAKE the liberty also of presenting for the perusal of the society a MS. treatise on the same subject addressed to Sir Ashton Lever, which though compiled by a sadler at Manchester, contains some particulars which may deserve attention, as likewise drawings of the different sorts of arrows, which must always exceed mere verbal descriptions.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

DAINES BARRINGTON.

P. S. Upon looking over more carefully the plan of the archer's marks, I find a greater distance than from *Lambeth* to *Westminster-Hall* (see a former note), viz. from *Turks Whale* to *Absoly*, being thirteen score and five yards.

[r] This county hath long been famous for this exercise, as appears by the following line to be found somewhere in Leland's *Collectanea*,

"*Lancastheere faire archers.*"

I shall conclude this essay by mentioning, that the long-
bow continues to be used as a means of exercise by the inhabitants
of Geneva, and in many parts of Switzerland; and London,
where a society (of which I am a member) is still in existence.
The president frequently uses this means of recreation.
I take the liberty also of mentioning for the benefit of the
society a MS. treatise on the same subject, addressed to Sir Ashton
Lyster, which, though compiled by a doctor at Manchester, con-
tains some parts which may deserve attention, as they are
drawings of the different sorts of arrows, which must always ex-
ceed in their verbal description.

47. This copy has long been known for its excellence in the following line in the collection in the Library of Congress.

Designed by Joseph Flaxman

ARCHERY.

Engraved by J. Heath





Painted by R. Smith. R. A. The Landscapes by J. B. Jones.

Blue. *Representing a Meeting of the Society of Royal British Architects*
(Most respectfully Dedicated by the Royal Highnesses)

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS



GEORGE PRINCE OF WALES

In Surrey, the Duke of Devonshire & by Commission
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